

(Claims as originally filed)

Claims

1. A process for producing polymerisates by the use of conjugated dienes and vinylaromatic compounds by anionic polymerization in an inert reaction medium in the presence of
 - at least one lithium-organic compound,
 - at least one dialkyl ether of the formula

$$R^1-O-CH_2-CH(R^3)-O-R^2$$
 wherein
 - R^1 and R^2 are independently of one another alkyl residues having a different number of carbon atoms, which are selected from the group comprising methyl-, ethyl-, n-, and iso-propyl, and n-, iso-, sec-, and tert-butyl, and wherein the total carbon atoms in the two alkyl residues R^1 and R^2 are 5 to 7, and
 - R^3 represents hydrogen, a methyl- or an ethyl group, and
 - at least one alkali-organic compound, wherein the alkali-organic compound is employed in quantities from greater 0.5 mol per mol of lithium in the lithium-organic compound.
2. A process according to claim 1, **characterised** in that prior to or during the polymerization reaction, aromatics having several vinyl groups or alkyl aromatics having several vinyl groups are added as cross-linking couplers.
3. A process according to any one of the preceding claims, **characterised** in that at the end of polymerization the living chain ends are reacted with couplers, which are selected from the group of aromatics having several vinyl groups, alkyl aromatics having several vinyl groups, silicon tetrachloride, and tin tetrachloride.
4. A process according to any one of the preceding claims, **characterised** in that the alkali-organic compound is an alkali metal alcoholate of the formula M-OR, wherein R represents an alkyl group having 1 to 10 carbon atoms, preferably 3 bis 5, and M is sodium or potassium, preferably sodium.

5. A process according to any one of the preceding claims,
characterised in that the alkali-organic compound is added to the
polymerization mixture conjointly with the lithium-organic compound or the
dialkylether in the form of a ready-for-use blend.
6. A process according to any one of the preceding claims,
characterised in that the conjugated diene is 1,3-butadiene or 1,3-
butadiene and isoprene.
7. A process according to any one of the preceding claims,
characterised in that the inert reaction medium essentially consists of
cyclo-hexane and/or hexane.
8. A process according to any one of the preceding claims,
characterised in that ethyl-ethyleneglycol-*tert*-butylether
($\text{CH}_3\text{CH}_2\text{OCH}_2\text{CH}_2\text{OC}(\text{CH}_3)_3$) is employed as a dialkylether.
9. A process according to any one of the preceding claims,
characterised in that a monolithium compound having 1 to 12 carbon
atoms, particularly 4 to 6, is used as a lithium-organic compound.
10. A process according to any one of the preceding claims,
characterised in that the polymerization is carried out at 0 to 130 °C,
preferably 20 to 100 °C.
11. A process according to any one of the preceding claims,
characterised in that vinylaromatic compounds having one or more vinyl
group(s) ($-\text{CH}=\text{CH}_2$) on the aromatic ring, preferably 8 to 20 carbon atoms, and
particularly styrene are employed, such that 30 to 60 wt.% of the monomeric
units in the polymerisate are vinylaromatic compounds, particularly styrene
monomeric units.

5 12. A process according to any one of the preceding claims,
characterised in that the lithium-organic compound is used in quantities
from 0.01 to 1, preferably 0.01 to 0.2, parts per 100 parts by weight of
monomer.

10 13. A process according to any one of the preceding claims,
characterised in that the dialkylether is employed at a molecular ratio
from 2 : 1 to 30 : 1, preferably 2 : 1 to 15 : 1, based on the number of
molecules of the catalyst (referring to the lithium atoms).

15 14. Polymerisates obtainable according to the process of any one of the preceding
claims.

20 15. The use of the polymerisates manufactured according to any one of claims 1 to
13 for the production of or use in silencing materials and/or tyres, particularly
winter tyres and mud and snow tyres, preferably tyre treads.

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